

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING 10-19-2023**

Meeting was convened at 6:35 p.m. in the rectory.

**Present** – Father Joe, Kathryn Moery, John Riordan, Matthew Lee-Own, Michael Griffin, Jorge Otero, Katie Pomroy

**Opening Prayer** – Kathryn delivered the opening prayer using [“A Prayer to the Holy Spirit”](#) followed by [Prayer to the Holy Spirit](#) from UCCB (both distributed through paper copy). Of particular significance to those who discerned serving on the Pastoral Council this year, the first prayer was offered during our night of discernment.

**Minutes** – Minutes of the 9-21-2023 PPC meeting were reviewed and approved without correction.

**Announcements** –

- Lighting for Windows in Church - Fr. Joe brought our proposal for additional illumination for the church windows to the Finance Committee. During the Oct. meeting, the Finance Committee indicated they would look into the proposal and investigate the costs involved regarding materials and labor.
  - This proposal is currently on back burner for Finance Committee.

**Book Discussion [15 mins]** – Discussion was opened into Chapters 1 & 2 of Divine Renovation: Beyond the Parish.

- The initial chapters of the book provide a realistic analysis of the current status of the Church as it operates in an increasingly secular world. The expectations of widespread religiosity as seen during the times of “Christendom” (where faith and society were strongly interlinked) have to give way to a missionary Church.
- Discussion of several countries (Ireland, Germany, Australia and Italy) and how the Church is faring in each nation. **In general Church attendance is declining in all countries.**
- Fr. Joe brought up a passage that he felt resonated with him from the book. Pg. 15 excerpt from the Gospel of Matthew: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20)

- Fr. Joe commented that we have done a good job with the **baptizing and teaching** but need to focus more on the making of disciples.
- Fr. Joe brought up an observation from Fr. Mallon that when the precepts of Divine Restoration were implemented, membership experienced an initial dip but rebounded with people deeper in their faith.
- Inquiry was opened into what demographics for Assumption Parish are, to which Fr. Joe indicated that post COVID the parish has experienced a drop of about 20% active membership compared to three years prior (2020).
- Current demographics of the parish are that we are starting to see more **young parishioners who in general prefer to attend the 5pm Mass on Sunday evening.**
- Discussion ended on topic of inquiry into what the goals of the Diocese are in relation to Renew My Church.
  - Fr. Joe indicated that stated goal of the Diocese is to bring the unchurched back to the Church through programs. (e.g. Alpha).

### **Old Business [20 minutes]**

- **Welcome Events** – Discussion was opened into setting up welcome events for the Parish and potentially getting groups to sponsor events. This would be a good opportunity for a less active or well known group in the Parish to get a jumpstart and possible infusion of members.
- **Ministry Fair** – Proposal was made that we setup a ministry fair in conjunction with our welcome events so that parishioners know how they can get involved.
  - To accomplish this, we need a list of who is running all the ministries and to check in to see which ones are active and which ones need additional support.
  - Fr. Joe mentioned that a ministry fair was run about 10 years ago (~2013) and the turnout for the initial event was very good. Turnout was lower when the same event was run a year later as the “newness” might have worn off.
  - Proposal was made that instead of having tables setup for a ministry fair, we have a central structure or focal point (a tree) where people can pull off a “leaf” that will have various ministries on it with contact information.
  - Goal is to make the ministry fair very approachable and less organizational.
  - Discussion was tabled for subsequent meeting.
- **Parish Pastoral Council Meet & Greet Event** – goal is to have a welcoming event featuring the PPC before the end of the year.

- Three weeks ago the PPC was in the bulletin and the council wants to ensure that we show our faces in the congregation so that parishioners know who we are.
- Proposal for a PPC event in November to be held either Nov. 4-5<sup>th</sup> or Nov. 18-19<sup>th</sup> at every weekend Mass. PPC members would serve as greeters and be available to interact with Parishioners before and after Mass.
- Nametags for this event were provided by Kathryn and will be written by Katie.
- Fr. Joe indicate that he would be making pulpit announcements for this event.
- Saturday / Sunday (11/4/23 and 11/5/23) were selected for the PPC Meet & Greet event and council members signed up to represent the event at the Masses that weekend.
- **Couples Event** – goal is to have an event specifically for couples recently married at Assumption
  - Couples will meet and have Mass together followed by a meal and discussion.
  - John Riordan will be working with Fr. Joe on this item.
- **Additional Events** – Proposal was made to have similar events for RCIA graduates and families of newly baptized infants.

### **New Business [20 minutes]**

- **Renew My Church Update** –
  - Fr. Joe indicated that the response to the Alpha program has been good and praised the Evangelization Team for their work in getting that started.
- **Archdiocese Support for Renew My Church** – John Riordan inquired as to whether the Archdiocese has published any instructions or materials regarding Renew My Church.
  - Fr. Joe indicated that other than providing training for the Evangelization Teams and Alpha Teams there were not any additional published materials.
- **Catholic Leadership Institute Survey** – Council members are asked to review the results of the survey here and come up with a question or two about what we would like to know about our Parish. We will use these questions to setup searches of the dataset to create useful metrics for improvement. See link to survey here: <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/reports/kg5c83>
- **Katie raised two items for follow up in future meetings:**
  - Branding campaign for Assumption Parish – Katie provided the example of a parish who provided new parishioners with a coffee

mug, sweets and a pen. How can we adapt this to our community?

- Fr. Joe is celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his Ordination in 2024 – PPC wants to organize an event to commemorate this milestone.

**Closing Prayer** – Father Joe delivered the closing prayer on the theme of Hope and Joy encouraging us to remain hopeful that even in times where situations seem difficult / stressful that there we can have reasons for Joy.